ANNUAL REPORT ON EVALUATION FINDINGS 2001

Evaluation Unit
International Development Research Centre

June 2001

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the highlights of the findings that emerged from 15 evaluation reports the Evaluation Unit received between April, 2000 and March, 2001. It is the eighth such report received by the Board. Over the years, this annual synthesis has balanced the specific learning needs of programs with the need to report on learning at the corporate level. It has presented project-specific results and it has aggregated evaluation findings to raise program and corporate issues. IDRC's evaluation system is now being more fully integrated with cyclical reporting on programming. Future reports will reflect this evolution.

Section I presents findings drawn from 15 evaluations with specific attention to three areas of program performance: capacity building; policy influence and the utilization of research results.

Three reports were reviewed in relation to **capacity building.** They all reinforce the idea that "learning by doing" is effective in building research capacity. For example, the Office of Central and Eastern Europe Initiative's (OCEEI) report on building environmental research and management capacity in Ukraine acknowledges that hands-on research experience was more valuable and effective than training seminars. The Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) Program Initiative provides evidence to support the effectiveness of building research capacity by supporting hands-on modelling and research experience. The process of learning by doing in this context helped strengthen skills in difficult and complex economic modelling methodologies. Another example of the value of research experience as an opportunity for learning and project development is offered by a project in Ecuador, supported by the Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health Program Initiative.

Five reports were examined looking at **research influencing policy**. Two of the reports indicate that industry or sector mapping was an important step towards building policy analysis capacity. Networks and collaboration between policy makers and researchers facilitated linkages which support policy influence through research. The MIMAP report provides an example of how these linkages also facilitated dissemination of the research findings. The *"Survey, Review and Assessment of 33 Completed Technology-Based IDRC Projects"* report provides two examples where the tangible application of research results increased the possibility of research influencing the decisions and policies of local, regional and national level governments. Constraints to policy influence were highlighted in the *"Africa and the General Agreement in Trades and Services Project"* report including: (1) the need to address governance in policy-oriented projects; and (2) the lack of policy capacity within the participating countries. This report also suggests that a stronger focus on policy analysis would help to address the policy capacity issue.

Although each of the five reports implies policy influence, they all stop short of providing actual evidence of it. One lesson from this section is the potential value in gaining a deeper understanding of the processes through which research influences policy and how to foster this influence. There is the suggestion that one useful starting point may be to map the different types of policy influences. Another lesson is the importance of involving research users and beneficiaries, beginning early in the design stage of the research process, in order to build capacity and increase research influence on policy.

Finally, Section I looks at two reports that explore the **utilization of research results** in IDRC-supported projects. The primary lesson that emerges is that planning for utilization is important during the design stage of project development. This includes the involvement of users and beneficiaries, and a focus on incentives and "buy-in", in order to engage government and industry stakeholders actively in the research process.

Section II provides information about two processes through which projects and programs contribute to corporate learning: **Project Completion Reports (PCRs)** and **Program Initiative (PI) evaluation plans**. PCRs are internal documents required for projects that receive $100,000 or more of IDRC funding. The study examined the current and potential usefulness of PCR information, and identified four important research support issues: project design; participation of users and beneficiaries early in the research process; IDRC project management; and research capacity building for marginalised groups and women.

In relation to project design, nearly one-third of PCRs reported that project design needed improvement. Some of the key design features which help foster development results are identified, including: dissemination of results; capacity building to understand and influence public policy; developing linkages with local users, partners and beneficiaries; participatory approaches for involving local people; and, demonstrating the value of proposed changes. In terms of project management, the report highlights project monitoring as a concern, echoing findings in evaluation reports going back to the early 1990s. Past evaluations have also identified IDRC's style of collegial monitoring as fundamental to the value recipients place on IDRC support. The PCR study found that 16% of the sampled PCRs identified the need to increase monitoring. Finally, on capacity building, the report indicated that, overall, research capacity building at the institutional and individual levels was reported 90 and 87 percent of the time, respectively. However, the sampled PCRs also indicated that strengthening research capacity for women at the individual and institutional levels were reported for only 44 and 29 percent of projects. The report concludes with recommendations, addressing both the content and the design of PCRs, aimed at increasing the system's overall usefulness. As the Centre now looks at redesigning the PCR format, the challenge will be to provide for in-depth reflection individually on diverse projects, with enough standardization to allow for aggregation at the program and corporate levels.

The second part of Section II presents the main topics identified for evaluation by the PIs in their evaluation plans. These include partnerships, capacity building, policy influence, tools and methods, and gender. Overall, the plans are results-oriented with a strong emphasis on the relevance and effectiveness of the research and on sustaining benefits from the results.

Section III presents examples of the application of the Outcome Mapping methodology in a variety of contexts for planning, monitoring and evaluation. This tool, which IDRC continues to test and refine with its internal and external partners, is being applied in instances where it provides an effective way to report on development results.

An example of how Outcome Mapping is being used for **planning** is provided by a project with BAIF, an Indian NGO with which IDRC has worked since 1986. The current Swayamsiddha Project is aimed at improving women's health and empowerment in nine project sites in six Indian states. By incorporating the fundamental principles of Outcome Mapping into BAIF's project planning, the project team is documenting changes in the behaviour of local NGO partners to understand the contributions of project activities to women's health and empowerment in the target communities. The Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB) PI is using elements of Outcome Mapping to **monitor** gender mainstreaming with the PI. During a workshop held in Uruguay in February 2000, Outcome Mapping was used to develop a performance framework for monitoring the mainstreaming process. Preliminary results provide details regarding whether or not gender analysis is being incorporated into SUB projects, and if so, how it is being incorporated. The third example outlines how Outcome Mapping was used for an external, ex-post **evaluation** of the International Model Forest Network Secretariat (IMFNS) in November 1999. IMFNS focussed its evaluation on the importance of capacity building and partnerships, rather than on measuring the actual performance of the model forests themselves. Using Outcome Mapping, the evaluation was able to establish that IMFNS played an important role in establishing model forests, and that this support was crucial to achieving their outcomes. The IMFNS was also able to identify its specific contributions.

ANNUAL REPORT ON EVALUATION FINDINGS 2001

Table of Contents

All documents mentioned in this report can be obtained from the IDRC library.

INTRODUCTION

This report signals a new stage in the evolution of IDRC's corporate evaluation system. Since 1994, the Evaluation Unit has reviewed the annual output of evaluations and, through the Annual Corporate Evaluation Report, has highlighted for staff, senior management and the Board of Governors the significant events and findings. Documenting corporate performance in this way is a challenge in a learning-oriented, use-driven, decentralized evaluation system. The challenge lies in the tension between doing studies that respond directly to the learning needs of specific projects within a diversified program portfolio, while at the same time, responding to the need to standardize some findings across studies to permit aggregation for learning and reporting at the corporate level. The delicate balance between learning and accountability, between ownership and compliance, is fragile and needs to be tended carefully in order to maintain evaluative thinking and learning at all levels throughout the organization. Not only is this fundamental to IDRC's approach to programming, it also makes evaluation a more efficient and effective management tool.

Over the past 7 years, through the use of strategic evaluations, external reviews, the Annual Corporate Evaluation Report and other mechanisms, the Centre has comfortably managed this balance. The system is now poised to move to a higher level of integration. Since the implementation of the Corporate Strategic Program Framework, 2000-05 (CSPF) senior management has identified the areas in which it will monitor performance at the corporate level. It has begun to systematically define these performance areas and to make adjustments to existing reporting mechanisms in order to enhance the generation and use of information on corporate results within the Centre's decision-making and reporting processes and events.

The CSPF identifies areas of performance relative to the results achieved by Centre-supported research for development as well as the modes of delivery employed by IDRC to support that research. Reports on corporate performance will cover the progress toward the results intended in each performance area. Clearly specified intended results in each area along with the strategies being used to promote these results provide the framework for reporting on corporate performance.

With the implementation of results reporting against the CSPF, the role and content of this report may change. Signalling this impending change, this year's report is called the **Annual Report on Evaluation Findings**. As in previous years, the report reviews a selection of the findings from the evaluations completed over the past twelve months. With the recent completion of the first three year funding cycle for Program Initiatives, a large number of ex-post evaluations were commissioned towards the end of the cycle and some were completed too late for inclusion in this year's report. Fifteen reports were received in time and form the basis for the analysis presented.

An additional 22 reports were received after March 1 and will be reviewed for inclusion in future reports or for use in strategic evaluation work over the next year. With such a large number of evaluation reports submitted, it will remain important to observe how the PIs, Secretariats and Corporate Projects are learning from and using the evaluations. One option may be to include the contents of the evaluation studies in PI Annual Reports in order to share information and knowledge with others, including Senior Management. Future reports will reflect the Centre's new corporate performance monitoring as well as evaluation at the project and program level.

Section I presents the experience drawn from 15 evaluations with specific attention to capacity building, policy influence and the utilization of research results. One of the primary lessons from this section is the indication of the potential value in gaining a deeper understanding of the processes through which research influences policy and how to foster this influence. There is the suggestion that one useful starting point may be to map the different types of policy influences.

Another lesson from the experience presented in these reports is the importance, for capacity building, policy influence and research utilization, of involving research users and beneficiaries early in the research process, at the design stage. Section II, which echoes this theme, focusses primarily on a study exploring the current and potential usefulness for corporate learning of Project Completion Reports. It also highlights project monitoring as a continuing program delivery concern which has been raised in evaluation reports going back to the early 1990's. This issue is important because several evaluations identify IDRC's style of collegial monitoring as fundamental to the value recipients place on IDRC support. Section III presents some examples of how Outcome Mapping has been used in a variety of contexts for planning, monitoring and evaluation. This tool, developed in IDRC, has been picked up with some enthusiasm internally and externally, as it responds to some of the difficulties development agencies face as they search for effective ways to report on the results of their efforts. IDRC continues to test and refine this methodology with internal and external partners.

Most of the findings presented in this report are not new. Several have been recurring themes in assessments of IDRC's support for development research. This suggests the importance of continuing our efforts to learn how to improve effectiveness in building capacity and fostering research utilization. The move to results reporting at the corporate level offers the springboard for renewed attention to these recurring issues.

SECTION I: LEARNING FROM EVALUATION REPORTS
Lessons From Experience: Capacity Building, Policy Influence and Utilization of Results

The Evaluation Unit received 15 evaluation reports during the period April 2000-March 2001. The reports include reviews and assessments of projects and programs in all three of the Centre's programming areas: Social and Economic Equity (SEE), Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM), and Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D). Although the reports focus on a variety of evaluation topics for specific program purposes, this section looks at the reports from the perspective of three of the Centre's priorities for corporate learning: (1) capacity building; (2) the influence of research on policy; and (3) utilization of research results. This is not an exhaustive examination of the evaluation reports submitted to the Evaluation Unit, but rather a selective synthesis of lessons that emerged from the findings and experiences documented in these reports.

1. Capacity Building

Three reports were reviewed in terms of what they indicate about capacity building at both the individual level and at the institutional level. All three of them include very different projects/programs which use a variety of approaches to capacity building. Nonetheless, all reveal the same lesson from experience: **'learning by doing' as an effective approach for building capacity**.

Enhancing Research Capacity in Ukraine: The Experience of IDRC in EMDU (Phase 1)[1]

The Office for Central and Eastern Europe Initiatives (OCEEI) was first established in 1993 to develop and manage a CIDA-funded program, implemented by IDRC, in Central and Eastern Europe. OCEEI employs technical expertise, project management, network-building and support services to find innovative solutions to the problems in the region with its partners in Eastern and Central Europe and from other regions of the world[2].

[1] *Enhancing Research Capacity in Ukraine: The Experience of IDRC in Environmental Management Development in Ukraine (EMDU) as Applied to the Rehabilitation of the Dnieper River, A Case Study.* By Jean-H Guilmette and Igor Iskra. 2000.

[2] This information can be found at http://www.idrc.ca/oceei/main_e.cfm

This report was written for the purpose of presenting this project at a conference in Berne, Switzerland held in September 2000. In terms of the methodology, the data for this report were collected using unstructured interviews along with some analysis of internal documents. The systematic consolidation of internal documents through internal monitoring, analysis and reporting provided a large portion of the information used.

Drawing on the Centre's 30-year history and understanding of capacity building, OCEEI aims to strengthen the capacity of environmental managers, environmental scientists and research institutions in Ukraine through the Environmental Management Development in Ukraine (EMDU) Project. OCEEI managed Phase 1 of this CAD4.6 million project on behalf of CIDA. For its part, the OCEEI focussed its attention on the process of building research and management capacity while emphasizing IDRC's 'demand-driven' methodology.

According to the report, OCEEI was able to (1) build relationships based on trust; (2) encourage transparency in the research process; (3) employ local talent; and (4) build up local institutions to eventually function without its help. As a result, OCEEI has been able to achieve its goal of contributing to strengthening environmental research capacity in the Ukraine, as well as to contribute to the generation and application of information and methods for monitoring and managing water quality.

The report highlights several immediate results from the project's research activities. Examples showing some of these results are presented in Box 1.

Box 1: Examples of the Application of Research, EMDU

- Information about the state of the Dnieper River was obtained and organised and a network of scientists and managers is now providing data on line for the management of the Dnieper River.
- A National Programme for Rehabilitating the Dnieper and Improving Water Quality was approved by the Verhovna Rada (Parliament). Most participants view that as one of the most important results coming out of the EMDU cooperation experience was the drafting and implementation of this policy.
- Environmental auditing and clean production concepts have been introduced and established. A group of Ukrainian scientists have formed a consortium to provide such audits nationally.

As a result of the **process** of capacity building in the EMDU project, Ukrainian researchers and managers feel more confident and *"recognize themselves as part of the world scientific elite and they now feel their opinions are respected and can have an influence on policies"* (p.15). Some examples of the results from the capacity building process are presented in Box 2.

Box 2: Examples of Capacity Building, EMDU

- EMDU allowed managers and many scientists to look at their problems more globally and to work as a team, especially when solving critical problems;
- Recipient institutions have learned how to conduct internationally recognized research, prepare and submit proposals, and write reports;
- Hands-on advice and coaching by IDRC staff, on a case-by-case basis, was far more valuable as a training tool than using training seminars which simply lectured to heads of research institutes.

Capacity Building in MIMAP[3]

The Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) Program Initiative (PI) aims to assist developing countries to design policies and programs that meet economic stabilization and structural adjustment targets while reducing poverty and softening impacts on vulnerable groups. This report reviews several of MIMAP's activities including its capacity building strategies.

The MIMAP PI utilizes several different strategies to increase capacity for economic research in developing countries. One is to systematically select countries for the location of a project since dissemination and capacity building *"largely depend on [existing] institutional capacity and responsiveness of policy makers in a given country"* (p.3). Another strategy is to provide researchers with "hands-on" modelling experience coupled with short training courses and programs given by international expert consultants. Another is through research experience. For example, *"pioneering work on developing Comprehensive General Equilibrium (CGE) models was undertaken by local researchers. Such skills were acquired by the process of 'learning by doing'"* (p.9).

MIMAP was praised for its ability to select viable host countries; however in some cases, *"the Program was not as successful in the selection of the host institutions"* (p.17). Given the complexity and relative difficulty of working with economic modelling methodologies, the report recommends that MIMAP explore strategies to systematically select and support host institutions

[3] *Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic and Adjustment Policies (MIMAP) Program Initiative Review of Experience: Directions for the Future*. By Vijay S. Vyas. October, 2000.

which already have the potential capacity and resources to meet the program's objectives: *"Individuals by themselves cannot be very effective without firm and adequate institutional support"* (p.18). The report further suggests that MIMAP could use "mature" projects, or those which have completed the first generation of modelling, to guide "new" projects. In this way, researchers could share experiences through existing networks and could provide Southern institutions more "hands-on" experience which could enhance their capacity.

A second issue is the need for periodic review of the training modules *"to ensure that they meet the changing requirements of the Program"* (p.10). As well, this would help MIMAP to focus more attention on incorporating other disciplines into programming, rather than continuing to emphasize economics *"to the exclusion of other social sciences"* (p.10). A third important issue is the gap in skill levels between the Project Leaders and the trainees. The report recommends that Project Leaders need periodic refresher courses, while support staff require more systematic training so that *"they are able to provide intellectual support to the Project Leader"* (p.11).

Both of these reports present strong evidence to support the idea that for capacity building, hands-on experience in research and research management make valuable contributions to expanding knowledge and building skills. How the process of 'learning by doing' facilitates capacity building in the research process is also illustrated in an evaluation commissioned by the Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (EcoHealth) Program Initiative[4] . The evaluation reviews the PI's progress in the use of transdisciplinary and participatory methods on programming its activities and in the implementation and outcomes of the projects it supports (See Box 3).

Box 3: 'Learning by Doing': An Example From Ecuador

"It was evident from the very first moments of this meeting that FUNSAD had put a great deal of thought and advanced work into preparing for the evaluation visit, and that they intended to use the evaluation as a fulcrum for their own learning and project development. The openness the team displayed toward looking at the research questions...and willingness to grapple with challenging issues in terms of their current thinking, their analysis of the evaluation of the project to date, and most especially toward understanding how to strengthen future stages of the research all contributed to the establishment of a working relationship for the evaluation that was collegial, constructive, frank and oriented to practice" (p.25).

[4] *Transdisciplinarity and Participation: An Evaluation of Transdisciplinarity and Participatory Aspect of the IDRC Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health Program Initiative*. Prepared by Michael Bopp, Ph.D. February, 2001.

2. The Influence of Research on Policy

A review of five reports which examine policy influence through IDRC-supported projects reveals several factors which have facilitated or inhibited the influence of research on policy. The evaluation reports also identify support mechanisms or approaches that were more or less successful in contributing to policy influence. Two strategies which were somewhat successful were (1) building the capacity of researchers to do policy analysis and (2) strengthening the links between researchers and policy-makers through networks and other forms of contact and collaboration.

Two of the three reports, Africa and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) Project Evaluation, and the evaluation of the Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques Sociales en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (RRPS/AOC), suggest that the exercise of industry or sector "mapping" is a very important step towards policy analysis. By "mapping" the industry or sector, project participants were able to gather basic information concerning the contribution of the services in that sector or industry and the regulatory environment. This enabled participants to gain a better understanding of the context for policy, as well as the strengths and weaknesses they found within the area under study. For many countries this research filled gaps where the information was either unavailable or did not yet exist. The third report examined in this section, Evaluation Report on EQUINET Activities, finds that an important first step to influencing policy is to explore the nature of policy making and to look at how policies are made and implemented at the local, regional, national and international levels.

The final two reports reviewed for this section, Eastern and Southern Africa Municipal Development Program (MDP), Phase III[5], and the Central American Network on Medicinal Plants (TRAMIL) - Red Centroamericana de Plantas Medicinales (Phase II)[6], both support the evidence provided in the RRPS/AOC report that networks and collaboration between researchers and government may provide mechanisms to facilitate linkages between researchers and policy makers to enable researchers to be in a position to influence policy. Examples from the TRAMIL and MDP evaluations are presented which offer positive results from such linkages.

As illustrated in the MIMAP Evaluation Report (2000), links between researchers and policy makers through Project Advisory Committees (PACs) may also facilitate the **dissemination of**

[5] *The Eastern and Southern Africa Municipal Development Programme: Final Evaluation Report of Phase III (1998-2000) Programme*. By Bamidele Olowu. February 28, 2001.

[6] *TRAMIL-Red Centroamericana de Plantas Medicinales (Fase II)*. Preparado por Sonia Lagos-Witte, MSc, PhD. 30 de septiembre de 1999.

findings. Most MIMAP projects have a national level PAC, which includes government representatives and a few "well known academics" (p.13) and which is seen as an *"institutional mechanism to reach the policy makers and other relevant publics"* (p.13).

While these reports highlight the issues in how research can influence policy, they also recognize a need for more research in this area.

Africa and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) Project[7]

The Africa and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) Project was launched in April 1992 as the outcome of a seminar on 'Services in Africa in the Context of the Uruguay Round Negotiations'. Over the course of eight years, grants totalling CAD872,080 were provided by IDRC in order to study the services sector in selected countries in East, West and Southern Africa. A total of 18 countries participated throughout the three phases of this project.

The report finds that the most significant success in this program was the industry mapping exercise which enabled participants *"to understand their services producing industries - and for those involved in the process a good deal was learned"* (p.8). However, the evaluation highlighted a number of obstacles or constraints to policy influence. The first can be expressed as the **need to address governance in policy-oriented projects**: *"the problems in the services producing industries...are not so much problems of international trade as they are ones of governance"* (p.10). As explained in ***"Evaluating Governance Programs: Report of a Workshop"***[8], good governance enables government, civil society and the private sector to participate in all aspects of political, economic and social development. The GATS evaluation report suggests that in many of the participating countries the political environment is not yet conducive to inclusive or transparent processes for joint political, economic and social development. The second issue relates to **lack of policy capacity** as a constraint to policy influence: *"there is a need to help countries understand the linkages between policies [like those between] road infrastructure and port enhancement"* (p.18). This lack of capacity could be addressed in several ways including a stronger focus on policy analysis capacities and dissemination of the research among the participating national and sub-regional policy communities.

---

[7] *Africa and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) Project: Final Evaluation*. Dr. Stephen L. Harris and Professor Olu Ajakaiye.
October 12, 2000.

[8] *Evaluating Governance Programs: Report of a Workshop*. Prepared by Fred Carden, Stephen Baranyi, Terry Smutylo & Jean H Guilmette. April 8, 1999.

The report concludes with four recommendations for the project regarding influencing policy. These recommendations include (1) more research to discover how the distrust between policy-thinkers and -makers can be ameliorated; and (2) the need to narrow the research focus since, *"it is very clear that the Sub-Saharan countries do not have the capacity to deal with the WTO agenda, with regional integration initiatives, and with domestic reform and governance issues"* (p.27); and (3) the recommendation to narrow the number of countries in the capacity building program, including only those which can reasonably be expected to achieve progress.

Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques Sociales en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (RRPS/AOC)[9]

The primary objective of the Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques Sociales en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (RRPS/AOC) was to promote applied research aimed at a better understanding of the problems related to social development with an integrated approach to social policy, to support more informed decision-making by politicians and planners. With a grant of CAD573,455 the project established a multidisciplinary regional network on social policy research involving eight countries in West and Central Africa. The objectives of this evaluation were threefold: (1) to establish the relevance of the research and (2) the effectiveness of partnerships; and (3) to determine if there was institutional and/or individual capacity building achieved.

In terms of the relevance of the research, the study found that the network was highly relevant to the national governments in the region. The three factors which facilitated this relevance include:

- the composition of the national research teams within the networks which included high level public servants, sector specialists as well as researchers;
- research plans and priorities were developed through national fora; and
- the global and multi-disciplinary approach to the research.

In relation to partnerships, the report found that the **involvement of government** and the **reputation and affiliations of the researcher** were two factors which were found to strengthen the links between researchers and policy-makers. In terms of involving government, one important mechanism was to develop research plans and priorities through the national research teams which included high level public servants as well as sector specialists. This ensured that the research remained relevant to policy-makers. Each national research team was also affiliated with a particular government ministry.

[9] *Rapport d'Évaluation du Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques Sociales en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (RRPS/AOC).* par Bé-Rammaj Miaro-II. 14 juillet 2000.

Where the network was most influential, it built strong relationships across the relevant agencies; leadership was key in this regard. For example, in Cameroon the coordinating institution for the research was the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Yaoundé under the Dean of Medicine, who as a result of his position at the university, maintained links with both the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Health. The research team as a whole came under the direction of the Ministry of Social Affairs. As a result of the linkages among these institutions, the research team was in a position to strengthen their linkages with the relevant policy makers.

Participation in the network - again, learning by doing - by researchers and policy makers created a mechanism for capacity building through training and teamwork. The report states that, *"91% of researchers said that their experience in the network gave them the ability to work with decision makers and other partners (100% in three countries)"*(p.38).

Evaluation Report on EQUINET Activities[10]

The Regional Network on Equity in Health in Southern Africa, EQUINET, is a result of the 1997 Southern Africa Meeting on Equity in Health. This network consists of research, civil society and health sector organizations seeking to influence policy on health in Southern Africa. The overall aim of EQUINET is to build alliances leading to positive policies on health at both the local and regional levels. This evaluation report assesses the potential of EQUINET and suggests future directions.

While presenting a positive view of EQUINET's first 18 months, certain areas were highlighted as a concern for EQUINET and its desire to influence policy: (1) current members are overburdened with work, which could risk the survival of the project; (2) the core of EQUINET is unable to expand its research activities; and (3) an important first step in reaching the objectives would be to explore the nature of policy making and to look at how policies are made and implemented at the local, regional, national and international levels. The evaluation report makes recommendations for addressing each of these areas.

Lessons From Experience

All three reports shed light on factors which facilitate and limit the influence of research on policy. Research networks involving researchers and government, workshops, and seminars all appear to facilitate the linkage between researchers and policy makers. Two further examples demonstrating the value of connecting researchers with government are provided in Boxes 4 & 5.

[10] *Evaluation Report on Equinet Activities.* Dr. Christina Laurell, University of Mexico. September 2000.

These evaluations *imply* policy influence, but stop short of providing evidence that research does indeed influence or change policy. As the reports suggest, in order to enhance the Centre's understanding of 'policy influence', a first step could be to 'map' or categorize the different types of influence on policy that have occurred thus far. This could lead to a more explicit and practical understanding of what is meant by 'policy influence', and how it occurs, so that research utilization objectives could be better met.

Box 4: Facilitating Research Capacity in Municipal Management: An Example From Africa

"The overall objective of MDP's policy research programme is to create an enabling environment for full democratic decentralization by national governments and for effective service delivery in municipalities. It achieves these objectives by supporting research on specific themes, which are then linked to workshops comprising the key stakeholders...There are several merits of this arrangement. Firstly, MDP assists not only in creating knowledge on important and critical issues of municipal management, it also helps to boost the capacity for conducting such research....A second advantage of this arrangement is that direct and close interaction is forged between researchers and policy makers" (The Eastern and Southern Africa Municipal Development Programme: Final Evaluation Report of Phase III (1998-2000) Programme: pp.25-26).

Work by the Evaluation Unit over the next 18 months will explore this issue in more depth, including a strategic evaluation on policy influence. This project will support a review of existing Centre documentation, and will develop an initial understanding of (1) what constitutes 'policy influence' in IDRC's experience; (2) the range of ways in which IDRC-supported research has influenced policy; and (3) the factors and conditions which have facilitated or inhibited policy influence. This activity complements, and will build on, other Centre activities examining the research-policy interface, including a series of workshops, and current and planned PI evaluation plans.

Box 5: A Collaboration Between Researchers and Regional Governments in Central America

One of the specific objectives of TRAMIL is the extension and consolidation of the collaboration with the Health Ministries in the region in the use of medicinal plants in the government health programs and policies. As a result of project activities health ministries are much more open on the use of medicinal plants and its application in the primary health sector services. Two regional meetings were organized with the participation of health ministries and national universities of Central America and the Caribbean, a process that concluded with the recommendation to adopt TRAMIL medicinal plants in the primary health sector programs of the region. *"In Panama, the Health Ministry is part of the TRAMIL network and actively participates in the dissemination of the project results" (p.36).* (TRAMIL-Red Centroamericana de Plantas Medicinales, Fase II).

3. Utilization of Research Results

The degree of effectiveness of facilitating the utilization of results in IDRC-supported projects is looked at in two evaluation reports: (1) Survey, Review and Assessment of 33 Completed Technology-Based IDRC Projects and (2) Evaluation of UPLB's Institutionalization of the Technology Evaluation, Development and Promotion System (TEDPS).

The major lesson that emerges is to **plan for utilization** of the results at the project design stage. Although planning for it does not guarantee utilization, it increases the opportunity and the potential for research results to be effectively applied to development problems. Both the reports also emphasized the need to work closely with users and beneficiaries, including the participation of business/private sector, in project design. This insight could prove to be a valuable stimulus for increasing attention, during project design, to what happens to the research results.

Survey, Review and Assessment of 33 Technology-Based IDRC Projects[11]

This evaluation report reviews 33 completed projects in 21 countries which cover a broad range of technologies and industry sectors. While IDRC has moved away from supporting this type of technological development, lessons from experience in research utilization may be applicable as the concern for utilization remains front-and-centre at IDRC.

The overall assessment of these projects indicates that IDRC was successful in its past efforts to *"fund and manage successful initiatives with broad developmental effects"* (p.i). It identifies 13 projects as being 'high potential projects' which present major opportunities for the utilization of these technologies through commercialization or further dissemination. It identifies ten additional projects as being 'medium potential projects' and ten as being 'low potential projects'.

Involvement of both users and beneficiaries early on in the project is highlighted as an important factor contributing to project success throughout the report. The most successful projects demonstrated the need for demand-driven research with active user/beneficiary involvement: *"actual use and commercialization of the results took place in projects that were inclusive, well managed and brought in users/beneficiaries and potential disseminators of the results (including industry and government) early on in the project"* (p.17).

[11] *Survey, Review and Assessment of 33 Completed Technology-Based IDRC Projects.* By John Holub, Technology Services Group Inc. 2000.

Box 6: Users and Beneficiaries

"In projects where industry, strong delivery agents, government or its agencies become involved as sponsors, collaborators or delivery agents, the benefits and developmental effects are greatly enhanced and results were more widely disseminated and adopted, more people were trained, more acceptable outcomes and products resulted; providing and creating jobs, particularly for women, improved environmental conditions, better and cheaper end products, increased income for users, with significant new policies and governmental programs created in some instances affecting public health safety and the environment" (Survey, Review and Assessment of 33 Completed Technology-Based IDRC Projects: p.18).

The report also points to the idea that utilization of research with positive results increases the possibility of research influencing local, regional and national government policies and cites two examples where this happened:

- Impregnated Bed Nets Project (#92-0800) in Benin: *"the project contributed to the emergence of a National program within the Ministry of Health"* (p.21);
- Inedible Oils Project (#91-1029) in Burkina Faso: *"the project has resulted in generally improved conditions and increased production for groups of village women participating in the oil industry"* (p.21).

The report argues, however, that without incentives for business, industry or government to participate in the project, the result may be limited dissemination and reach of the project's results, or technology. Given this, IDRC needs to focus on incentives and "buy-in" during the project design stage if Centre-supported projects are to contribute solutions to development problems.

Institutionalization of Technology Evaluation, Development and Promotion System (TEDPS)[12]

The Technology Evaluation, Development and Promotion System (TEDPS) was introduced to the University of the Philippines at Los Banos (UPLB) with the overall goal of improving the utilization of the university's research. More specifically, this one-year project received a grant of CAD61,249 in order to assess the university's research outputs, or technologies, for practical, economical and environmental soundness. One of the expected results of using the TEDPS was

[12] *Evaluation of UPLB's Institutionalization of the Technology Evaluation, Development and Promotion System (TEDPS)*. Jaine C. Reyes and Ma. Lourdes C. Torno. Research Management Centre, University of the Philippines Los Banos. February 28, 1999.

to sensitize researchers to research result dissemination and utilization concerns, and the importance of addressing these concerns from the beginning of the research process.

Implementation and integration of TEDPS into the university system was facilitated by some factors and impeded by others. Factors which facilitated the use of TEDPS were (1) the project's contribution to monitoring and evaluation activities by providing basic criteria for technology assessment and (2) facilitation of technology transfer. Examples of the limiting factors include change in project leadership, lack of support from top-management, an unwillingness of researchers to release their technologies or results, and the fact that the university is not mandated to commercialize research results. As a result of these limitations, as well as others, TEDPS did not effectively facilitate the utilization of the university's research. Clearly, the mandate of the implementing organization is crucial.

Modifications are needed if the system is to achieve the objective of improving the utilization of the university's research. One modification suggested by project participants is the *"encouragement of more demand-pull, business/private sector participation in research and technology development"* (p.30). Increasing the participation of business/private sector early in the project may add value to the development of the technology which may provide incentive for the business/private sector to facilitate the commercialization of the technology.

Lessons From Experience

Although there are different factors which facilitated or limited the utilization of results in each of these reports, the one overlapping point that can be emphasized is the **planned participation** or **inclusion of research users and beneficiaries, including both government and the private sector**, in the **project design stage**. The involvement of users and beneficiaries in the early stages of development research is not a new lesson but experience suggests that it is not always happening; it might be beneficial to examine further under what conditions users and beneficiaries are involved, how and with what results. The study on Project Completion Reports (PCRs) (See **Section II**) found that beneficiary involvement occurred in only 13% of the 75 projects that were sampled. An example of the benefits to the community derived by a research project involving the users and beneficiaries is provided in Box 7. The report that this example is drawn from demonstrated that the research project, which used a community-based approach to natural resource management, was very relevant to the farmers and communities involved. As a result of this relevance, the opportunity to actively use the research results was greatly enhanced.

Box 7: An Example of the Benefits If the Users/Beneficiaries are Involved in the Early Stages of the Research Project

"The project is highly relevant and the new research directions have already had a significant impact on the watershed community. It is not only consolidating the research efforts at Bajo but is also making the research more effective and applicable to the farming communities. At the same time the station-based research has not been neglected and this is vital for the long-term benefits of the national program. It is felt that the project is highly relevant because it addresses both the short term and long term problems of resource sustainability and productivity in Bhutan" (Mid-term Review: Wetland Production Systems Research Project, Bhutan. October, 1998).

SECTION II: FOUNDATIONS FOR CORPORATE LEARNING

This section documents two processes through which projects and programs contribute to corporate learning: Project Completion Reports (PCRs) and Program Initiatives' (PI) evaluation plans for the period 2000 - 2003/04. The PCR Content Analysis Study aggregates learning at the project level and suggests how PCRs can better contribute to corporate and program learning. The report identifies several shortcomings in IDRC project management, such as monitoring, and suggests that PCRs contain information which, if better maintained, could serve an important ongoing learning function. The PI evaluation plans indicate anticipated learning needs for programs over the next three to four years by identifying which issues need to be studied to contribute to learning at the project and program level.

PCR Content Analysis Study[13]

Project Completion Reports (PCRs) are internal documents required for projects that receive $100,000 or more of IDRC funding. Commonly recognized as a function of accountability, PCRs also provide an opportunity for Program Officers (POs) to synthesize their reflections on the processes and experiences of the research project. In July 2000, a former IDRC Program Officer was contracted to analyze a sample of recent PCRs to assess their value. This analysis examined the content of 75 PCRs, randomly selected from a total of 225 PCRs completed between January 1, 1997 to September 21, 2000. Content analysis was applied in two ways: (1) Across - analyzing the responses to each question across the 75 PCRs, and (2) Down - reading each individual PCR "in whole".

[13] *PCR Content Analysis Study: Final Report.* Prepared for the Evaluation Unit, IDRC. By Odilia Maessen. November 30, 2000.

In-depth and detailed comments in PCRs which contain substantial reflective and summative information on the significance of the research outcomes and processes were considered to be "gold nuggets". An example of a "gold nugget" is presented in Box 8.

Box 8: Significance of Capacity Building

"For both the institution and the individuals concerned, this was a useful experience. For probably the first time in their lives, the natural scientists had to develop and present results in a way that was useful to economic analysis of alternatives. At the same time, the economists involved had to base their analysis on specific options for and costs of treatment. The two teams learned to work together over the course of the project. In a more limited way, the natural scientists gained some skills in dealing with eutrophic environments" (910045, p. Appendix 1-21).

Although 77% of the projects sampled were considered a worthwhile or very worthwhile investment of IDRC funding, the study also identified several important issues and shortcomings in relation to research processes at the project level. The topics identified as areas for concern include: project design, participation of users and beneficiaries early in the research process, IDRC project management, and research capacity building for marginalized groups and women.

Project Design

Approximately 31% of the sampled PCRs reported that project design needed improvement. The report outlines 17 specific recommendations for improved project design that were suggested by the PCR author. Eleven percent of the comments associated with project design suggest that networking among projects needs improvement and that IDRC could play an important role in fostering formal networks among related projects. Key project design features identified in PCRs which may/did help bring about development impact are presented in Box 9.

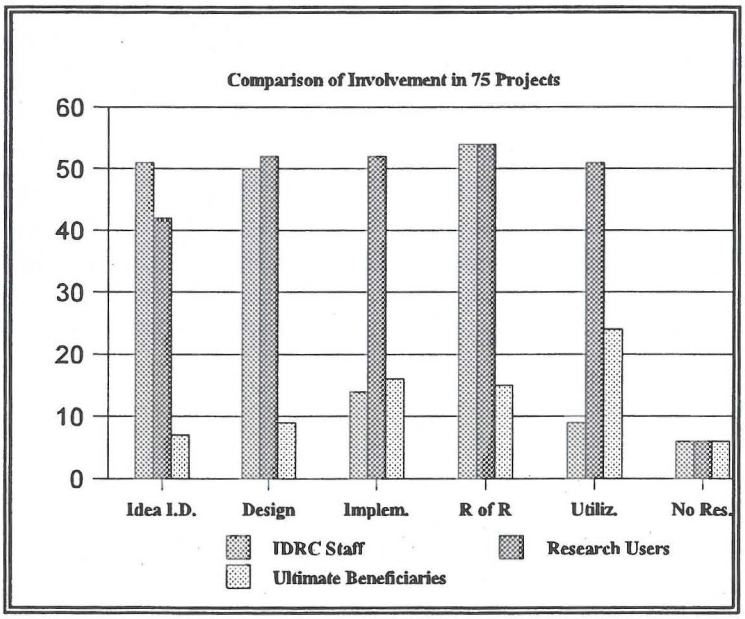
Box 9: Key Project Design Features Identified in PCRs Which May/Did Help Bring About Development Impact

- Dissemination of results (training, publications, workshops, community meetings, academic fora, to numerous policy and political groups in a variety of local, regional and national policy fora)
- Capacity building to understand/influence public policy
- Developing links between researchers, policy makers, decision-makers, business, international institutions, and stakeholders
- Using a participatory approach for involving local people
- Demonstration of value for proposed change

Also related to project design, the report points to a lack of gender analysis in some projects when PCR authors reported that approximately *"12% of the sampled PCRs specify that a gender and equity component/analysis was lacking (sometimes despite involvement of socio-economic experts in the project design)"* (p.16).

Participation of Users/Beneficiaries in Research Processes

The participation and involvement of different actors throughout the various stages of the research process was identified by analyzing PCR questions 3, 4b, 12, 13, and 16. The following figure from the study illustrates the areas in which people other than the research team were involved in projects:



Key

Idea I.D. = Idea Identification
Design = Project Design
R of R = Review of Results
Utiliz. = Utilization of Research Results
No Res. = No Response

Figure1: Comparison of involvement of IDRC staff, research users and ultimate beneficiaries in various stages of the project cycle for 75 selected projects (modified from M. Balcom's PCR report 24/08/2000, Evaluation Unit) (p. Appendix1-8).

This figure demonstrates that IDRC staff are most frequently involved in project idea identification, project design and review of research results, and are not as involved in project implementation or result utilization. The figure also illustrates that while research users are involved at various stages, project beneficiaries are more frequently involved in project implementation and utilization of results than at other, earlier stages. More specifically, the study found that project beneficiaries are involved with idea identification in 10% of the sampled PCRs, while 13% reported that beneficiaries are involved in project design. Participation of beneficiaries increases to 23% for project implementation, 22% for review of research results and 35% for utilization of results. However, less than half of the comments *"identify what specific role the participant played in that particular area of the research process"* (p.11). Fewer still (~6%) provide insight into the impact of the 'involvement'. Yet comments in some PCRs reveal that *"user or beneficiary participation was critical to the success of the project design or outcome"* (p.12). Further, as pointed out in **Section I, Utilization of Research Results**, increasing the participation of users and/or beneficiaries will most likely increase opportunities for the utilization of results.

Project Management by IDRC

Ninety percent of the sampled PCRs indicated that projects *"were considered to have been managed satisfactorily by IDRC, both administratively and technically"* (p.18). Insight into the "unsatisfactory" cases however, revealed that the problems associated with these projects are of concern at the planning and monitoring stages.

In terms of **planning**, the need to have better addressed the dissemination of results from the outset was raised in 11% of the PCRs, while 5% of PCRs raised the need to have better addressed project or institutional sustainability at the outset. At least one PCR author reported that "[a]ttention must be paid to recipient buy-in" (p.19). As previous reports have shown, *"it seems logical that the more participants understand and agree upon purpose and have a sense of buying-in, the more care and energy they will bring to it. The issue might also be expressed as there being in the project a sense of ownership, of participants knowing where it and they were going, able to manage [its] direction (including the right and responsibility to make changes as needed) and ensuring the usefulness of its results"*[14].

[14] *Supporting Development Research: An Assessment of the Specifics of IDRC's Approach to Program Delivery*. By Sarah Earl & Terry Smutylo. Evaluation Unit, IDRC. May 1998: p.14

While PCR authors acknowledged the importance of **monitoring** as a factor affecting the success of a project, a common issue that emerged from PCRs was the inability to monitor adequately. They identified the need to increase monitoring in 16% of the sampled PCRs. Lack of monitoring *"was related to: loss of interest or priority of a project due to changes in programming or changes in the responsible PO, heavy workload, budgetary constraints, and difficulty to access (geographical, political, or security issues)"* (p.19). It was also recognized that some projects required more than "adequate" monitoring: *"some projects require a higher degree of monitoring than IDRC has been able to provide in recent years"* (p.19). This is reinforced by some cases where *"more than usual monitoring was critical to the success of some projects"* (p.19).

Box 10: Examples of Comments Regarding IDRC Project Management Issues

"Direct monitoring was very important for this project. Of the several monitoring visits that Centre staff conducted for this project, at least three (two visits by the PO and one by the Regional Comptroller) were additional to what one might have normally expected for a project of this size. Such direct monitoring probably saved this project from falling apart several times. The Centre might wish to bear this in mind in its deliberations on travel budgets, risk management strategies, and (regional + Ottawa) office staffing" (002588, p. Appendix 1-41).

"The project did not get as much monitoring as it deserved, but this was an explicit decision based on the quality of the researchers and the great expense of monitoring..." (910076, p. Appendix 1-41).

It should be noted here that "monitoring", in the IDRC context, consists largely of technical/methodological support, collegial problem-solving and encouragement. It is the mechanism through which program staff maintain personal contact with the research team after the IDRC funding has been approved. In the 1998 assessment of the specifics of IDRC's approach to program delivery[15], program staff were reported to have defined monitoring as close and regular contact with the project leader and the project site (through visits, e-mail, faxes, phone calls, etc.) which *"encourages, supports and promotes excellence among the research team, quickly alleviates problems and helps avoid surprises and crises"* (p.26).

With specific reference to changes in programming, 9% of the sampled PCRs reported "negative effects" on the projects when IDRC implements programming changes (p.19). Yet, *"the importance of PO/IDRC involvement to the success of the project was explicitly highlighted in 16% of the*

[15] *Supporting Development Research: An Assessment of the Specifics of IDRC's Approach to Program Delivery*. Prepared by Sarah Earl and Terry Smutylo. May, 1998.

projects" (p.19). Further, *"the transfer of management from one PO to another or of technical and administrative responsibilities from one unit to another was reported to have had a number of possible negative effects in at least 9% of the projects"* (p.19). The importance of monitoring by POs/IDRC is an issue that was emphasized in the ***"Project Leader Tracer Study"* (1996)**[16] which reported a decline in Project Leader/Program Officer interaction from the 1970s to the mid-1990s. The decline was attributed to programming changes as well. For example, *"Interviewees expressed concern over times when monitoring and support were not forthcoming. They recommended that collaboration, consultation, and liaison with Program Officers should increase in frequency and intensity. Project leaders often attributed breakdowns in monitoring to Centre restructuring and staff turnover. This suggests that communication suffers as projects are shifted between Program Officers and responsibility centres"* (p.16). In a related analysis, the Tracer Study also found that the main reason researchers seek support from IDRC is to have non-monetary assistance with their research through the networking, professional ties, and links to other researchers which close contact with IDRC provides. Taken together, the PCR Content Analysis Study, the Project Leader Tracer Study and earlier works point to the erosion of IDRC monitoring associated with organizational changes going back at least 10 years (See also *"Project Monitoring: Cross-analysis of PCR, EVIS and Tracer Study Data"* in Section 2.4, ACE Report, 1995).

Box 11: Non-Monetary Support: An Observation

"IDRC is pioneering a new field of research that carries with it a new set of systems-level knowledge and skill requirements not generally taught in most discipline-based graduate training programs. IDRC is therefore more than a funder of research. In this case, IDRC is really an intellectual partner to the programs it funds, and as such needs to provide other supports, in addition to funding, in order to midwife the birth and early development of the Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health research paradigm" (Transdisciplinarity and Participation: An Evaluation of Transdisciplinarity and Participatory Aspects of the IDRC Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health Program Initiative: p.83).

A 1996 study of the successful support by IDRC of the Navrongo Health Research Centre (NHRC) in Ghana[17] found that *"relative to the small amount of funding provided, IDRC has played a disproportionately important role in the enhancement of the NHRC's research capacity over the past six years"* (p.9). Three of the five factors identified as the basis for this success were directly related to the collegial, technical and networking aspects of IDRC's style of monitoring. The costs of labour-intensive monitoring need to be weighed against these payoffs. One PCR explores a possible solution to some of these issues which is to improve the

[16] *Project Leader Tracer Study*. By Stephen Salewicz and Archana Dwivedi. March, 1996.

[17] *The Origins and Achievements of the Navrongo Health Research Centre*. By Terry Smutylo, Sarah Earl and Beth Richardson. September, 1996.

management of project documents and files and to provide a "formal pass-over process between officers" (p.19).

Capacity Building

The sampled PCRs also indicated that a substantial amount of institutional (recipient) and individual capacity building occurred as a result of these projects. Institutional and individual capacity building was reported as having occurred in: research skills, research management, capacity to sustain research, and capacity to link research and utilization of results.

Box 12: Content Analysis of Capacity Building in Relation to "Research Skills"

"Close to 90% of the PCRs reported some level of capacity building in research skills at the institutional level and 87% at the individual level. Furthermore, 69% and 82% of this capacity building was considered significant or very significant at the institutional level and individual level respectively. However, if 'non-applicable' projects and PCRs which gave no response are excluded from this calculation, we can say that of the relevant projects which reported capacity building ~99% reported some level of capacity building in institutional research skills and 98% for individuals" (p. Appendix 1-20).

This coincides with the findings regarding individual capacity building in the Project Leader Tracer Study which stated that, *"For every skill type, at least 90% of the respondents felt that their work on IDRC-funded projects had enhanced their capacity to some degree"* (p.22).

However, much less capacity building was reported in PCRs for marginalized groups and women. Of the PCR authors who reported 'marginalized groups' as being applicable to their project, 42% indicated growth of institutional research capacity, and 45% indicated growth for individual research capacity. In relation to the research capacity and skills of women, 29% of the sampled PCRs reported growth at the institutional level and 44% at the individual level. However, there is some ambiguity with this finding since many of these projects did not consider women's involvement applicable to the project. Comments associated with this question provide the following reasons for "not applicable"(p. Appendix 1-27):

- the women's involvement was unknown;
- the project design did not incorporate a gender component;
- the project design did not address women's issues; or
- no women researchers were involved with the project.

The study concludes with recommendations which address both the content and the design of PCRs. Successfully addressing the design issues, along with other changes, may help to facilitate

the reflection process. This, in turn, may help to improve PCR content and, ultimately, increase the PCR system's overall usefulness. The addition of probing questions could be used to promote more in-depth information and details of the significance about the research process. As a result, through the aggregation of PCRs IDRC-supported projects may be able to better contribute to corporate knowledge. The Evaluation Unit is currently working with Programs and Partnership Branch (PPB) and the Information and Technology Management Division (ITMD) with the purpose of revisiting PCRs in relation to the type of information the Centre, and in particular PPB, wants to collect in order to make them more useful for program staff.

Program Initiatives' (PI) Evaluation Plans 2000 - 2003/04

The following table (Table1) presents the current evaluation plans for each of the Program Initiatives (PIs) which have been approved by the Board of Govenors: Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PBR); Trade, Employment and Competitiveness (TEC); People, Land and Water (PLaW); Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health (EcoHealth); Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM); Cities Feeding People (CFP); Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic Adjustment Policies (MIMAP); Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB); and Managing Natural Resources, Latin America and the Caribbean (Minga). The plans outline the **main topics** of interest which the PIs have identified for evaluation. The table also includes the draft plans for both the PAN and ACACIA PI's. It should be noted however, that the evaluation plans for both PAN and ACACIA have yet to be approved by the Board of Governors.

Several of the planned evaluations focus on participatory approaches, as a way to conduct community self-evaluation, or project or program assessments. There is also an emphasis on testing and assessing the effects of inter-disciplinarity implemented in some projects or programs through PI collaborations and other partnerships. Five PIs are including elements of gender analysis in their evaluations. Gender analysis is included to make gender more visible in both the research outcomes as well as the research methodologies. Aggregated, these plans display an interest in looking at both process and results in order to have a more complete picture of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of Centre-supported projects and programs.

The PI evaluation plans are results-oriented with a strong emphasis on relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Further, they are focussing on topics very relevant to target areas set out in IDRC's current strategic program framework CSPF 2000-05. Setting out their evaluation intentions in this table offers program staff an opportunity to identify topics of common interest being addressed in other programs. As well, the evaluation components of PI work include not only project and program evaluations, but also the methodological work they use to strengthen partner/recipient capacities in monitoring and evaluation, including direct training.

Table1: Main Topics for Evaluation Identified by Programs:

	PARTNERSHIPS	CAPACITY BUILDING	POLICY INFLUENCE / RELEVANCE	TOOLS & METHODS	GENDER ANALYSIS
PBR	formal partnerships with other donors		how peace-building research influences policy.	assessment of ICTs as a tool for capacity building/training in human rights	
TEC		enhancing developing country research capacity on trade issues	policy-relevance and influence of research (partners/stakeholders and use of results).	technical rigour and coherence of research methods	how effectively has gender analysis been integrated
PLaW	partnerships between researchers and local communities			do methodological tools improve community participation including the control of development research	explicit attention to gender in R&D work
ECOHEALTH	inter-PI collaborations	,Ecohealth training and awards		what tools/methods developed or modified are integrated into research	
CBNRM		assessment of capacity building; participatory monitoring and evaluation as capacity building	improved policies (on-going activity)	assessment of participatory approaches and tools	
CFP		building regional and multi-regional capacity in UA research & methodology		assess the overall approach to wastewater treatment and reuse within CFP	past accomplishments & future strategies for mainstreaming gender
MINGA	convening inter-sectoral research partnerships	strengthening capacity of municipal governments to cope with change		lessons learned from strategies to apply tools and methods	evaluation of gender mainstreaming within the PI
ACACIA	review of the Acacia South Africa Partnership Assessment of Uganda National Advisory Committee Strategy and Partnership	Telecentres and SchoolNet Sustainability Studies (for increasing the capacity of telecentre and schoolnet structures)	evaluation of Mozambique information policy process; summative review of South Africa information policy support program		
PAN	collaborative work between project recipients	studies for increasing the capacity of civil society organizations in their ability to take advantage of ICTs; PAN Telecentre Evaluation and Learning Group (Asia) Telecentre Learning and Evaluation in Latin America and the Caribbean	evaluation on the impact and policy of the ICT in Bhutan	evaluation of PAN R&D Small Grants Program; evaluation framework on the impact of ICTs; evaluation methodology for telecentres	review of gender mainstreaming at the ICT projects and program.
SUB			evaluation of policy impacts	what methods work/do not work in relation to gender mainstreaming	evaluation of gender mainstreaming within the PI
MIMAP	multi-partner initiatives		comparative policy impacts among MIMAP projects		

SECTION III: OUTCOME MAPPING[18]: HOW IS IT BEING USED?

The following three cases provide practical examples of how IDRC and its partners are using Outcome Mapping for: (1) planning, (2) monitoring, and (3) conducting evaluations.
As discussed in last year's Annual Corporate Evaluation Report, this methodology characterizes and assesses the contributions of a project or program to the achievement of outcomes. **Outcomes** are defined as changes in behaviour, relationships, or actions that the project/program has influenced and which indicate progress towards development goals. This is a key distinction from evaluation approaches which focus on changes in conditions or characteristics measured against the intended downstream development goals. Outcome Mapping instead focusses on the changes which an initiative seeks to influence directly and on the strategies it uses to do this. So far, Outcome Mapping has proved to be a useful, flexible methodology, adaptable to a range of needs and contexts.

Box 13: Why Outcome Mapping?: The Conceptual and Practical Problems of Assessing Results

When referring to **impact**, development organizations usually mean significant and lasting changes in the well-being of large numbers of intended beneficiaries. These changes are the results for which donors expect accountability. This is problematic because the complexity and fluidity of development processes mean that the achievement of such impacts requires the involvement of a variety of actors, often over a considerable period of time. Project results tend to move to the impact stage as the project's contribution is adopted, adapted and expanded by endogenous activities and institutions. Large-scale change - or impact - is often the product of a confluence of events for which no single agency or group of agencies has control or can realistically claim credit.

In response to this problem, IDRC has developed a new methodology called 'Outcome Mapping'. This methodology recognizes the long-term intended impacts, or goals, while realistically evaluating the development organisation's progress in contributing to them in the shorter term. It does this by focussing planning, monitoring and evaluation on targeted behaviours, actions and relationships within the project's or program's sphere of influence and on learning how to increase effectiveness in relation to the ultimate goals. The shift is towards being accountable for demonstrating progress towards impact and improving effectiveness, not for the impact itself. The intended "impact" becomes the guiding directional beacon, not the yardstick against which a project or program is measured.

[18] *Outcome Mapping: Planning and Documenting International Development Results as Changes in Behaviour, Facilitation Manual (Draft)*. By Sarah Earl, Fred Carden & Terry Smutylo. Evaluation Unit, IDRC. February 2, 2001. This is available from the Evaluation Unit, or online at: www.idrc.ca/evaluation/outcome.html

Planning: An Example from BAIF[19]

IDRC has worked with BAIF, an Indian NGO, since 1986. The current CAD3.1 million CIDA-funded Swayamsiddha Project, is aimed at improving women's health and empowerment in six states in India and is administered by IDRC through the New Delhi Office, the EcoHealth PI and the Evaluation Unit. A large component of this project involves building the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) capacity at BAIF and the implementing NGOs.

The BAIF project team clearly wants to develop and use a learning-oriented M&E system that encourages reflection and improved action throughout the life of the project. A considerable task then was to develop a monitoring and reporting system that balanced the accountability needs of CIDA, with the learning needs of BAIF.

The main principles of Outcome Mapping have shaped the thinking of many of the staff members involved. As a result, some of the fundamental principles of Outcome Mapping are embedded within the project's logframe, the most important of which is documenting observed changes in behaviours and actions as outcomes leading to development results. These principles allow the project team to record and document changes in the behaviour of its partners and understand the contributions of the Swayamisddha Project to women's health and empowerment in the target communities.

Box 14: Using Outcome Mapping For Project Planning

- BAIF explicitly identified the various actors that the project is working with to encourage or facilitate change (e.g. women's self-help groups, community leaders);
- BAIF was able to articulate output and outcome statements for the 9 partner NGOs, as well as BAIF, to reflect the view that building of capacities in the organizations were valid results for which the project should plan and take credit;
- Using Outcome Mapping also helped the team to define 'women's empowerment'. This led to a discussion of how the project will involve both quantitative and qualitative indicators, and in particular the need to think about how to work towards better documentation of qualitative changes;
- The team used elements of Outcome Mapping for participatory planning by rural women in rural communities.

[19] *M&E System for Swaymsiddha Project: Draft.* Prepared by M&E Cross-Cutting Group. November 29, 2000.

Monitoring: Mainstreaming Gender in SUB[20]

The Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (SUB) PI focuses on the relationships between the local management of biodiversity and global policy initiatives. The SUB PI recognizes the importance of gender issues in biodiversity research and made a commitment to mainstreaming gender in its programs and projects. A key feature of their approach will be to make the link between gender equity issues in research supported by the PI to equity issues within the team and IDRC itself.

In February 2000, the SUB team held a workshop in Uruguay and used the Outcome Mapping approach to develop a performance framework for mainstreaming gender in the PI. In this instance, Outcome Mapping was used to create a number of key steps for monitoring the mainstreaming process[21]:

1. The team developed a mission statement which helped them to develop a definition of what "gender mainstreaming' means, as well as an "ideal" statement about the PI's broad contribution to the process;
2. SUB team members identified themselves as the key targets for influencing behaviour change;
3. The team described how the behaviour, relationships, activities and/or actions of program staff will change;
4. The team developed graduated milestones for Program staff in order to assess the changes in behaviour regarding gender within the PI, the Centre and with partners;
5. Team members identified the mix of strategies that SUB will use to meet its outcome challenge (i.e., the ideal changes they want to see).

The next step for the SUB members was to identify the data collection methods that would allow team members to observe and record any changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities and/or actions of the program staff. The data collection tools identified and being used are:
(1) PI staff interviews (three rounds) and interviews with some partners (one round); and (2) document review. The staff and partner interviews are designed to gather self-reflective

[20] *'Are We There Yet?': Monitoring and Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Program Initiative (Evaluation Framework and Timeline of Activities).* Prepared by Sheri Arnott. September 25, 2000.

[21] *Mainstreaming Gender in SUB: Developing a Performance Framework to Evaluation Success. Report on Gender Mainstreaming held during SUB Team Meeting, February 8-12, 2000.* Prepared by Sheri Arnott. Facilitated by Terry Smutylo. February 26, 2000.

information which will assist the PI to document the progress (if any) when compared to previous interview data. Results from this will feed into an evaluation to be conducted in 2002.

Initial results from the first round of SUB team members' interviews[22] provide details regarding whether or not gender analysis is being incorporated into SUB projects, and if so, how it is being incorporated. These strategies are presented in Box 15.

Box 15: Strategies for Mainstreaming Gender in SUB

- Nesting gender issues within the context of a social analysis. This has the combined effect of neutralizing the more 'threatening' term of gender analysis, thus helping to overcome partner reluctance, and it does not presuppose that 'gender' is the only or the most important social variable to consider.
- Make sure women are represented at different levels in the project, from the research team to the beneficiaries.
- Identifying partners who are already committed to gender/social equity, even if they lack the specific skills required to undertake a gender analysis. Changing attitudes of researchers is much more problematic and requires a longer time frame.
- Include someone on the proposal review team who has gender/social science expertise. This could also enhance the social science capabilities of the research project team.

The challenge for SUB is that gender mainstreaming is difficult to conceptualize and even more difficult to implement in a meaningful way. SUB is consciously reflecting on which strategies work, and which ones do not work in order to make important programming and management decisions based on evidence coming from experience.

An Ex-post Evaluation: The IMFNS Example[23]

Outcome Mapping was used to frame an external, ex-post evaluation of the International Model Forest Network Secretariat (IMFNS) in November 1999. The main objective of the IMFN Secretariat is to foster cooperation and collaboration in advancing management, conservation, and sustainable development of forest resources through a worldwide network of working model

[22] *'Are We There Yet?' Report on the First Rounds of Interviews with SUB PI Staff: As Part of Monitoring and Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming in the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Programme Initiative*. Prepared by Sheri Arnott. January 19, 2001.

[23] *IMFNS Outcomes Assessment*. Assessment Team: Jim Armstrong, Fred Carden, Amanda Coe and Sarah Earl. July 2000.

forests. Model forests are about people and how they use and interact with the forest ecosystem and the many resources embodied in it, such as soil, water, and wildlife. Model forests are also about community-based partnerships and about people learning to make decisions together.

This evaluation was conducted to fulfill a CIDA performance review requirement. Through negotiations, IMFNS convinced CIDA to use the Outcome Mapping method to permit the Secretariat to focus its evaluation on the importance of capacity building and partnerships within the context of model forests, rather than measuring the performance of the model forests.

Outcome Mapping was used to answer the following evaluation questions:

- Who has IMFNS reached?
- How have the behaviours of IMFNS' partners changed?
- What has been the nature of IMFNS' interactions with its partners?

In order to answer these questions, two workshops were held with IMFNS staff in early 2000. At the workshop they clarified the macro-level changes they wanted to support (vision), articulated the areas the Secretariat worked in to support the vision (mission), identified with whom they had directly worked (boundary partners), and stated the ideal changes that they envisioned for their boundary partners (outcome challenges). Since the evaluation focussed on capacity building and partnerships, graduated milestones that monitored progress in these two areas were developed for two of their boundary partners, local communities and government officials, across five sites in Russia (1 site), Chile (1site) and Mexico (3 sites).

Box 16: Outcomes for Local Communities

"In all five model forests, changes in behaviour and relationships have been demonstrated that are consistent with the principles of participation and local ownership central to the model forest concept. These impressive results indicate that, fundamentally, the model forest concept meets the needs of its participants and that they view participation in the partnership as a means to encourage individual and community development" (IMFNS Outcomes Assessment: p.14).

Data for this assessment was collected through document reviews and key informant interviews. Once data had been collected for the five sites, analysis of each of the five Model Forests (MFs) was conducted as well as a comparison across the five sites.

The report concludes that IMFNS *"played an important role"* (p.23) in establishing model forests, and that this support was crucial to achieving their outcomes. By utilizing the Outcome Mapping approach, the assessment was able to examine the specific contributions that IMFNS has made to the establishment of model forests.

Evaluation Reports Received by the Evaluation Unit, April 2000 - March 2001

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Project and Program Evaluations			
MANEJO COMUNITARIO DE LOS RECURSOS NATURALES EN LADERAS - INFORME DE EVALUACION EXTERNAL - FASE II - 1997-1999 por Bárbara María Krause y Gloria Meléndez (Evaluation of CIAT Hillsides Project - This evaluation was co-funded by IDRC and SDC)	ENRM	MINGA 050210	Latin America
Mid-term Review: Wetland Production Systems Research Project, Bhutan. By Dr. Hans Schreier, Dr. Urs Scheidegger, & Dr. A. Gomez. October 24, 1998.	ENRM	CBNRM 040301	Bhutan
Annual Review of Cities Feeding People Report Series (September 1995-December 2000) and the Cities Feeding People Web Site (February 1998-December 2000) in terms of Program Information Dissemination Accomplishments. By Jeffery J. Pelletier. Janurary 4, 2001.	ENRM	CFP Program Level	Global
AGRICULTURA URBANA EN AMERICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE: Impactos de projectos de investigacion. (AGUILA). produced FLASCO & IDRC.	ENRM	CFP 004542 002759, 003753, 00778, 003152, 850203	Latin America and Carribean
Transdisciplinarity and Participation: An Evaluation of Transdisciplinarity and Participatory Aspects of the IDRC Ecosystem Approaches to Human Health Program Initiative, Final Report. By Michael Bopp, Ph.D. February 2001.	ENRM	EcoHealth 04291, 004321, 03825, 03329-03-1, 100482, 03494	Ecuador, Cuba, Ethiopia, Kenya

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Review of Generating Incentives for Sustainable Natural Resource Management Phase II (SRISTI). By Yianna Lambrou. February 1998.	ENRM	SUB 003267	India
Environmental Action Centres Phase II Evaluation. By Martin Mujica. January 1999.	ENRM	SUB 050211	Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay
TRAMIL II: Self-Evaluation. By Sonia Lagos-Witte. September 1999.	ENRM	SUB 003233	Belize, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, El Salvadore
Planting the Future: Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation Program Network Evaluation. January 2000.	ENRM	SUB 000813	Global
CGIAR Program on Participatory Research and Gender Analysis Internally Commissioned External Review. January 2001.	ENRM	SUB 002810	Global
IDRC-Funded Research on Indigenous Knowledge. By Tamara Dionne-Stout & Steve Langill. November 1999.	ENRM	SUB 87 projects that focus on Indigenous knowledge of the environment	Global
IMFNS: Outcomes Assessment. By Jim Armstrong, Fred Carden, Amanda Coe, and Sarah Earl. The Governance Network. July, 2000.	ENRM	Secretariat IMFNS	Russia, Mexico, Chile

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Enhancing Research Capacity in Ukraine: the Experience of IDRC in Environmental Management Development in Ukraine (EMDU) as Applied to the Rehabilitation of the Dnieper River: A Case Study. By Jean-H. Guilmette and Igor Iskra. October 3, 2000.	ENRM	OCEEI 003695	Eastern European
Infrastructure Services Performance Review Environmental Management Development in Ukraine - 1 project (1994-1998). Prepared by Cowater International Inc. November 1999 received February 2001.	ENRM	OCEEI 003695	Eastern European
War-torn Societies Project in Practice. By June Kane with WSP Staff. 1999.	SEE	PBR 000853	Global
Rebuilding After War: Lessons from WSP. By Matthias Stiefel. 1999. (Internal)	SEE	PBR 000853	Global
The War-torn Societies Project in Puntland, Somalia. By Ken Menkhaus. May 2000. (Independent Evaluation).	SEE	PBR 000853	Somalia
Diagnóstico de la Investigación para la Consolidación de la Paz en América Central: A Review of Research for Peacebuilding in Central America. By Angel Saldomando, Carmen Rosa de Léon, Ricardo Riberia, Carlos Sojo. November 2000.	SEE	PBR 000853	Central America
The Eastern and Southern Africa Municipal Development Programme: Final Evaluation Report of Phase III (1998-2000). By Bamidele Olowu. February 28, 2001.	SEE	ASPR 00833	Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe
Review of Environmental Policy Initiative, Phase I. (Stakeholder-commissioned independent review and assessment). 1999.	SEE	PBR 003746	South Africa

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Technical Assessment of the Final Report for the Arias Foundation-CERCA Project on Local Reintegration Strategies in Central America and Colombia. By Stephen Baranyi. March 2000.	SEE	PBR 004594	Central America and Colombia
Technical Assessment of the Supplement Request for the Arias Foundation-CERCA Project on Local Reintegration Strategies in Central America and Colombia. By Stephen Baranyi. June 2000.	SEE	PBR 004594	Central America and Colombia
Evaluation Study: 4 Reports (a) IDEA Challenge, Change and Transition, An Institutional Assessment; (b) Country Assessment: Nigeria (c) Country Assessment: Indonesia; (d) Country Assessment Guatemala. By E.T. Jackson & Associates of Ottawa. 2000.	SEE	PBR 004109	Nigeria, Indonesia, Guatemala
A Review of the South African Local Business Service Centre Programme: Current Status, Future Prospects: Final Report for International Development Centre - Regional Office Southern Africa. By Robin Bloch and Stephen Daze. June 19, 2000.	SEE	SMMEIT 002141	South Africa
Evaluation of the Industrial Support Unit (Palestine) Project. By James Mullin.	SEE	SMMEIT 060026	Palestine
Evaluation Report of Equinet Activities. By Dr. Christine Laurell. September, 2000.	SEE	ASPR 04378	Southern Africa
Macro Impacts of Macro Economics and Adjustments Policies (MIMAP) Program Initiative Review of Experience: Direction for the Future. By Vijay S. Vyas. October, 2000.	SEE	MIMAP Program Level	Global

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Evaluation of UPLB's Institutionalization of the Technology Evaluation, Development and Promotion System (TEDPS). By Jaine C. Reyes & Ma. Lourdes C. Torno. February, 1999.	SEE	COM/FAD 90-0279	Philippines
Rapport d'Évaluation du réseau de recherche sur les politiques sociales en afrique de l'Ouest et du centre (RRPS/AOC) by Bé-Rammaj Miaro II. July, 2000.	SEE	ASPR 003930	Africa
CAPAS Program Evaluation: Final Report. By Dr. Stephen L. Harris and Professor Olu Ajakaiye. October, 2000.	SEE	TEC 004479	Africa
The Micronutrient Initiative: Evaluation of Programs and Operations 1992-2000. Confidential. By Anne Whyte, Mestor Associates Canada. July, 2000.	SEE	Secretariat MI	Global
Mid-Term Assessment of the ACACIA Program of IDRC 1997-2000. Confidential. By Anne Whyte, Mestor Associates Canada. March, 2000.	ICT4D	ACACIA	Africa
GK-AIMS (Global Knowledge: Activity Information Management System) Evaluation. By Michael Graham. April, 2000.	ICT4D	Bellanet 002037	Global
Success Stories of Rural ICTs in a Developing Country: Report of the PANAsia Telecentre Learning & Evaluation Group's Mission to India. November 2000.	ICT4D	PAN 03778	Asia
An Evaluation of PAN's Website and Technical Services. By Michael Graham. March 2000.	ICT4D	PAN Program Level	Global

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Survey, Review and Assessment of 33 Completed Technology-Based IDRC Projects. By Holub, Technology Services Group Inc. February, 2000.	ENRM, SEE, ICT4D	SMMEIT 840193, 910216, 910236, 890039, 841032, 870342, 928750, 900289, 861008, 870167, 950610, 871036, 900001, 851020, 920806, 921301, 890280, 920011, 870084, 880258, 891035, 891005, 920274,911029, 901008, 890019, 891027, 911001, 920800, 880215, 910158, 931013, 901019, 921452, 900278, 911051	Global

Title, Author, Date	Related Program Areas	Projects Covered	Country/Region
Evaluation Systems Review		**PCR File Numbers**	
PCR Content Analysis Study. By Odilia Maessen. November 30, 2000.	ENRM, SEE, ICT4D	00014, 00032, 00058, 00074, 00194, 00236, 00300, 00351, 00378, 00394, 00484, 00763, 00845, 00882, 01051, 01269, 01551, 01575, 01609, 02033, 02126, 02588, 02643, 03001, 03945, 40081, 40137, 40224, 40341, 83199, 87207, 87277, 88074, 88134, 88285, 89041, 89119, 89158, 89225, 89262, 90046, 90087, 90149, 90236, 90275, 90342, 91023, 91036, 91045 91076, 91094, 91132, 91146, 91178, 91218, 91224, 91241, 91272, 91299, 92017, 92232, 92403 920415, 92610, 92611, 92615 92618 92810, 92100, 92456, 92751, 92757, 92759, 93501, 93755	Global